

EPA to Remove Asbestos-Contaminated Building

Little City Building Site
Ottawa, Illinois

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For more information

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

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Little City Building location map showing planned street closure for the duration of the cleanup.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency plans to remove asbestos-containing insulation from the Little City Building this summer. The building is at 112 W. Madison St. in downtown Ottawa. It is severely damaged and contains asbestos throughout, which would pose a threat to public health should the building collapse. After the cleanup, the Agency will tear down the remaining structure.

The cleanup will begin July 27 and will take about six weeks to complete. Measures will be in place to ensure the work is done safely and doesn't affect surrounding buildings and neighborhoods.

One lane closed

The **westbound** lane in the 100 block of West Madison Street may be closed to traffic for the duration of the project. The eastbound lane should remain open.

What is asbestos and how does it pose a risk to people?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that was highly valued as a building material in the mid-20th century because of its fire-resistant properties. However, the substance releases microscopic fibers into the air. These fibers have been proven to cause lung cancer and other lung diseases if inhaled.

For more information about asbestos and its related health risks, visit www.atsdr.cdc.gov/asbestos.

Work site safety

Contractors will be performing the cleanup under U.S. EPA oversight. They will take several steps to protect the safety and health of residents and workers during the project. Access to the worksite will be limited by fences and entry gates.

As work proceeds around the property, control and decontamination areas will be set up for workers, materials and equipment leaving the area.

During the project, residents may see workers wearing protective suits and gear. There will be some noise from the use of equipment, but work will be done only during business hours on weekdays.

U.S. EPA plans to monitor the air for small particles and asbestos at specific locations around the property's perimeter.

What will be done to clean up the site?

After removing all the asbestos, workers will tear down the building under the emergency provisions of federal asbestos regulations. The structural integrity of the building prevents a more standard cleanup that would permit the building to be redeveloped.

During the teardown, workers will spray water in the area to keep dust from becoming a problem. They will remove debris to an approved off-site disposal location.

U.S. EPA and Illinois EPA will evaluate the need for further sampling to determine the extent of asbestos contamination.

Site background

Little City Building is a five-story structure built in 1902. There have been attempts in the past at redeveloping the building. However, its dilapidated state and the presence of asbestos-containing materials make that economically unfeasible.



Residents may soon see cleanup work at the Little City Building.



Workers at the site may be seen wearing protective equipment for safety.